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Parris Island Museum

Marine Corps Recruit Depot
Parris Island, South Carolina 29905

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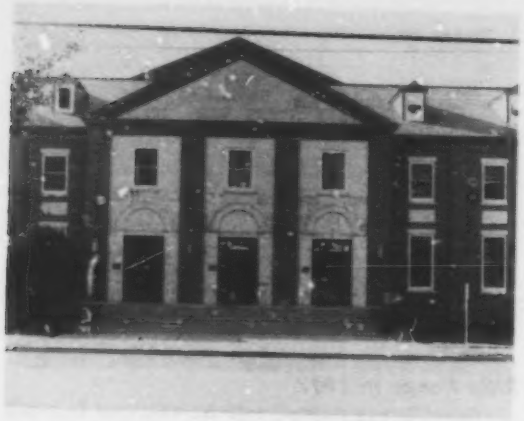


The War Memorial Building, constructed in 1951, is the home of the Parris Island Museum.

In 1562 Jean Ribaut led French Huguenots to Port Royal Bay.

PARRIS ISLAND MUSEUM

The Parris Island Museum is located in the War Memorial Building, which stands as a monument to the Marines of the past as well as a source of inspiration for Marines of the future. The Museum is devoted to the portrayal of the history and development of Parris Island and the Port Royal area, the Marine Corps and recruit training. The Museum also contains a study collection and research facilities to aid scholars in studying regional military and Marine Corps history.

EXHIBITS

Through its displays, the museum depicts the history of Parris Island, beginning with the landing of French Huguenots in 1562. Four years later, the Spanish built the fortified village of Santa Elena on Parris Island, which survived until 1587 when they retreated to St. Augustine.

After the Spanish left, English colonists came to Port Royal, and in 1735, relatives of Alexander Parris, owner and namesake of the island, settled on Parris Island. By 1820, the number of plantations had grown to six, all producing sea island cotton.

The plantation period came to an abrupt end in November 1861, when the Federal Navy captured Port Royal Bay. The plantations were broken up into small farms and turned over to the ex-slaves.

Battle of Port Royal, 7 November 1861.

In 1885, construction began on Parris Island for a navy yard. A drydock was built and in 1891, a Marine Barracks was established. The yard was closed in 1911, and for a brief period the island served as a prison. In 1915, the property was given to the Marine Corps for use as a recruit depot.

Rifle Range in 1917.

During the first years of its existence, the depot trained over 46,000 Marines for duty in World War I. In the years between the World Wars, Parris Island Marines were stationed in Haiti, Nicaragua and China.

With the outbreak of World War II, Parris Island became the training site of 204,000 Marines, with as many as 20,000 on the island at one time. In the following decades, graduates continued to serve the nation in Korea, Vietnam, Grenada and Lebanon.

Parris Island Drydock, 1895.

1942 Recruits.

urrent recruits on the Confidence Course.

Women Marines are also an integral part Parris Island. They first arrived in 1943 as servists, taking over a number of adminis-ative duties. In 1949 women became a ermanent part of the Marine Corps, with arris Island as their only training site.

In all, over one million Marines have gradu-ted from Parris Island. Today, under the atchful eyes of their Drill Instructors, some 0,000 men and 2,000 women complete eir training at Parris Island each year.

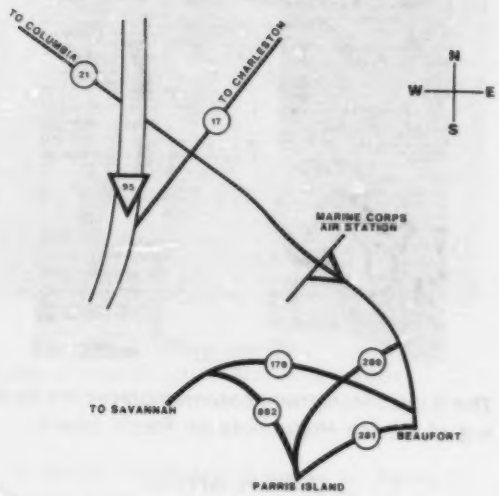
In 1985, Women Marines began qualifying with the service rifle.

The Ribaut Monument commemorates the landing of French Huguenots on Parris Island.

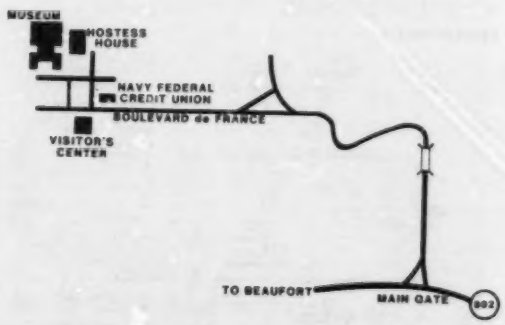
OTHER SITES

Besides visiting the museum, guests are encouraged to take a driving tour of Parris Island. The tour leads through the old Navy Yard, to the site of the Spanish forts and village and past various training areas. Schedules for graduations and morning colors are available from the Depot Visitor Center (525-3650). Also open to the public are picnic grounds, rest rooms and a restaurant.

A reproduction of the famous Iwo Jima monument stands next to the parade ground.



Visitors are requested to observe the posted traffic and security signs while at Parris Island; however, both military and civilians visitors may freely enter and leave the post.



FREE ADMISSION
Hours: 1000-1630 Mon.-Sun.
Closed: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.
Tours available by calling 525-2951.